

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/682,850

Applicant(s)

MAAYAH ET AL.

Examiner

Sheela C. Chawan

Art Unit

2623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to NOV 18, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 5 - 7, 17- 26, 31- 38 and 43 - 47 , Renumbered as 1-26.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 10/24/01, 6/22/05
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendment filed on Nov 18, 2005 has been entered.
Claims 1- 4, 8 -16, 27- 30 and 39 - 42 are cancelled.
Claims 5 - 7,17- 26, 31- 38 and 43 - 47 are pending in the application and
Renumbered as 1- 26.

Response to Arguments

2. As pointed out by the applicant's Remark, see page 9 1st paragraph, lines 3 - 9, filed on Nov 18, 2005 with respect to claims 5 - 7,17- 26, 31- 38 and 43 - 47 have been fully considered and as a result amended claims 5, 23, 24 and 36 and all dependent claims is now indicated allowable.

Drawings

3. The Examiner has approved drawings filed on 4/7/05.

Reason For Allowance

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:
Claims 5 - 7,17- 26, 31- 38 and 43 - 47 are allowed. As pointed out by the applicant's Remark, see page 9 1st paragraph, lines 3 - 9, filed on Nov 18, 2005 with respect to claims 5 - 7,17- 26, 31- 38 and 43 - 47 have been fully considered and as a result amended claims 5, 23, 24 and 36 and all dependent claims is now indicated allowable. The prior art of record Maeda et al., (US. 6,674,890) describes a method for inspecting patterned features of a semiconductor wafer, wherein a pixel-wise matching unit and other components are employed to compare successive images of a portion of

the wafer to detect defects therein. By adjusting gray levels of at least one of the successive images to be substantially the same as gray levels of the other of the successive images, greater sensitivities than were available using conventional systems are obtained. Maeda does not teach or suggest "finding repetitive regions of the microfabricated structures by creating at least one X-direction one-dimensional profile of a cell-metric of the contrast data and at least one Y-direction one-dimensional profile of the cell-metric of the contrast data and thresholding the at least one X-direction one-dimensional profile and the at least one Y-direction one-dimensional profile to derive contrast data of the repetitive regions", as commonly included in each of the independent claims 5, 23, 24 and 36 the prior art of record fails to teach either singularly or in combination, fails to anticipate or render the above limitations obvious.

5. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted on later than the payment of the issue fee and to avoid processing delays should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled, comments on statement of reasons for allowance.

Contact Information

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sheela C Chawan whose telephone number is. 571-272-7446. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7.30 - 6.00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jingge Wu reached on 571-272-7429. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Sheela Chawan
Patent Examiner
Group Art Unit 2623
December 28, 2005